

"I Like Men, but They Are What Women Make Them," Says Beatrice Harraden

Author of "Ships That Pass in the Night" Denies That Woman's Progress and Sex-Antagonism Are at All Synonymous.

She Thinks Women Have Now Advanced Beyond Men and Must Help Them to Catch Up Again.

Marguerite Moore Marshall.

Beatrice Harraden, author of "Ships That Pass in the Night," "Out of the Wreck I Rise" and numerous other novels, has just arrived in New York.

That simple statement is bound to evoke a useful memory in the minds of many of us. Literary "sensations" leap almost daily from the publishers' advertisements, but few, if any, possess the real dramatic value of Miss Harraden's debut as a novelist. For she gave us a new hero, a Discreetible Man. Not the rubber-stamp scamp or Satan in trousers, such as haunted even Bronte and George Eliot, but a cross-grained, stubborn, wilful, pathetic chap, the sort the Recording Angel himself has trouble in classifying.

The heroes of most women novelists are like the retouched photographs of madame de M... vacuously perfect and perfectly vacuous. It is only the great portrait painter who will not paint out the lines from the faces of his sitters, for he knows that the character indicated by these lines more than makes up for their superficial ugliness. And Miss Harraden has always refused to do a wrinkle from the soul of her men. Adrian Steele, the hero of her latest book, is an uncompromising mixture of hero and cad as the Discreetible Man himself—or as the man you happen to know best.

STRONG PERSONALITY OF THE WRITER.

And what of Miss Harraden, pioneer literary naturalist? One hates to say that she looks interesting, inasmuch as that adjective has acquired a fine flavor of indiscriminate. But she does. She is a person to be noticed in any gathering. Her party hair, of course, which is grayish and which she wears cut short, parting it on one side and letting it wave loosely over the back of her neck. But her peculiarly arresting quality seems centered in her glance, which manages to be swift, sympathetic and absolutely inclusive all at once. It goes straight beneath the surface, and yet there's nothing sword-like about it. It penetrates softly, like sunlight shining on water.

For the rest, she's a little study in brown; hardly more than two feet, I



BEATRICE HARRADEN.

fancy, fragile, exceedingly brown eyes, brown frock, wind-tanned face and hands.

SHE DOESN'T BELIEVE IN SEX SEGREGATION.

"Is it true, Miss Harraden," I asked, "that you've come to tell us how well the new woman can get along without man? Somehow, I never gathered that theory from your books."

"But indeed I do not think women will draw apart from men, or that they should do so. I have never talked nor written any such unnatural segregation of human interests. One of the reasons why I am such a firm believer in the woman movement is that I am convinced its success will result in a closer and more loyal union of the sexes. The perfect friendship of equals is bound to be a finer relation than the one-sided bond between master and slave."

"I like men," the novelist added, with ingenuous candor. "I've always liked them, and I fully appreciate their excellent qualities. I've had some splendid comradeships, and even if I am a militant suffragette I've never approved of wholesale condemnation of half the human race."

Incidentally, Miss Harraden looks the part of a "shrieking sister" about as much as—yes, just about as much as Mrs. Pankhurst does. That valiant spirit is another slender, fragile, low-voiced woman. However, she is taller than Miss Harraden, whose hammer, I am positive, must be made to order.

"The party to which you have allied yourself is continually attacking men," I reminded her.

"Oh, but women must be free!" she cried, the slight, tense figure leaning far forward in its earnestness. "I believe so much in women. Don't you?"

Aren't you a living example of what a woman can accomplish, even when conditions are not equal? And when they are, who can set limits on our achievement?

WOMEN WILL IMPROVE SOCIAL CONDITION.

"There are two big gains involved in the successful outcome of the woman movement. One will appear in many different forms, but its general description is simply the improvement of social conditions. When we have the power we shall not permit the labor of little children. We shall not allow our sisters to work overlong hours for a pittance. We shall find some way of rescuing those other sisters whose lot is even sadder, the women of the streets. Already we are learning not to draw our skirts aside from them, and they are becoming more willing to be helped by us since they do not scent the patronage beneath the pity."

"We have temporarily gone ahead of the men, instead of bringing them with us. The poor things are bewildered, and one can hardly wonder. Now it's one of our jobs to help them catch up."

"And you think they will suffer your help?"

"Other things being equal, the man of today is attracted to the woman of strong will and intense vitality. Tamar, one of the characters in 'Out of the Wreck I Rise,' is such a woman. She's been in my head for a dozen years, and when she went on paper there was no question but that the man in the book would turn to her."

"Nobody can do away with human nature, and love and marriage are human demands. The new woman desires her romance, but she desires a new man for the hero." "But your heroes triumph through their very imperfections!" I protested. "But I've only tried to show that each of us is a mixture of best and worst," she smiled. "That's human nature, too!"

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has kept women apart for centuries. Now we are becoming aware of our essential solidarity."

"And you are sure that this sense of solidarity is not accompanied by antagonism toward the opposite sex?" Miss Harraden's wide, expressive mouth bent in a smile trippingly compounded of tolerance, confidence and mirth. "Men are our sons, our lovers, our husbands and our brothers," she observed. "They are what we make of them; we have the first chance at them. If we feel any bitterness on account of our present position, it should be directed toward ourselves."

"We have temporarily gone ahead of the men, instead of bringing them with us. The poor things are bewildered, and one can hardly wonder. Now it's one of our jobs to help them catch up."

"And you think they will suffer your help?" "Other things being equal, the man of today is attracted to the woman of strong will and intense vitality. Tamar, one of the characters in 'Out of the Wreck I Rise,' is such a woman. She's been in my head for a dozen years, and when she went on paper there was no question but that the man in the book would turn to her."

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